the Richmond Review

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Funds to Reinforce Firefighting Infrastructure Run Dry

By Thomas K. Pendergast

Money from a 2020 bond measure, sold to voters as financing for expanding an earthquake-resistant pipeline system for westside neighborhoods, may run short for water infrastructure improvements instead after a unilateral decision by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC).

The Emergency Firefighting Water Supply (EFWS) system, formerly known as the Auxiliary Water Supply System, is a more robust system of pipelines that operates separately from the City's main water system. It was initially built after the 1906 earthquake because so many water mains and connections in the regular system were broken resulting in insufficient water pressure to fight fires.

It was completed in 1913, when most of San Francisco was built up in the northern and eastern parts of the City. After some additions in 1986, the furthest the system goes west is 12th Avenue in the Richmond District and 19th Avenue in the Sunset District. The hydrants for these are identified by red tops in the Richmond and black tops in the Sunset.

Former city supervisors Sandra Lee Fewer and Gordon Mar both pushed for the expansion of this system into western neighborhoods. Current District 1 Supervisor Connie Chan and District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio also support expansion of the EFWS.

In March of 2020, voters approved Proposition B which allowed bond sales of $628.5 million to improve post-earthquake firefighting infrastructure. It passed with 82% of the vote. While much of that bond money was slated for making firehouses and other firefighting infrastructure more earth-

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Marshall's Beach, SF's 'Secret' Getaway

By Kirk Stevenson

Larissa, originally from Brazil and now a nanny in New York City, braved the steep steps to Marshall's Beach to enjoy an afternoon with a breathtaking view of the Golden Gate Bridge during her brief visit to San Francisco. ***Photo by Michael Durand.***

Just north of Baker Beach, tucked away along the coast of the Presidio, lies Marshall's Beach. It is teeming with rocks and provides an iconic view of the Golden Gate Bridge with the Marin Headlands in the background.

Beachgoers have accessed this isolated shoreline by walking along the Battery to Bluffs trail, the connecting path between Marshall's Beach and Baker Beach. Its size and coarse landscape leave this beach overshadowed by its counterpart to the south.

Regarded as one of San Francisco's best hidden beaches, the origins and history surrounding Marshall's Beach is not wholly clear. Compared to its surroundings, the Battery to Bluffs trail is rather young, having been introduced in 2007 as an access point for Marshall's Beach.

Perched in the ocean directly in front of the beach is Helmet Rock, an islet recognized specifically by its white colored top. The rock shares the name with another nearby formation at Lands End – notably photographed by Ansel Adams. The Helmet Rock across from Marshall's Beach has been referred to as far back as the early 1900s.

A query posted on the editorial page of a 1912 edition of the San Francisco Call revealed that pieces of Helmet Rock had fallen off in 1898 and again in April of 1906, likely due in part to the earthquake that occurred that year.

Dating back to the mid-19th century, Marshall's Beach was one of the locations where a wooden water flume would run through to provide water to Fort Mason.

John Martini grew up in San Francisco and worked

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Budget Cuts Could Impact Students' After-School Programs

By Thomas K. Pendergast

The impact of California State education budget cuts may soon be felt by after-school programs throughout the City, including the Richmond Neighborhood Center at George Washington High School, five District 1 elementary and two middle schools.

The Center's usual budget of $153,000 from the state will be slashed by almost half, with $75,123 getting cut while leaving $77,877 in place.

Richmond Neighborhood Center's Executive Director Michelle Cusano said current high school students are still dealing with the aftermath of SFUSD schools being closed for more than a year during the pandemic, so now they need after-school programs more than ever.

"High schoolers are social beings. They want to be with their peers," Cusano said. "So now, this generation of young folks is facing that and having to relearn these social things at such a key time in their lives, during their adolescent development, where that's so important. And that's what we provide in after-school programs. We provide a space where they can experiment with social things like learning how to advocate for themselves in a safe space after

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Local Filmmakers Screen Documentary at 4 Star Theater

By Asha Ingram

Rev. Harry Chuck (left) and his son Josh collaborated to create the documentary "Chinatown Rising."

After decades of historical film he shot sat untouched in his basement, Richmond District resident Rev. Harry Chuck, with the help of his son filmmaker Josh Chuck, who lives in the Sunset District, is finally ready to show it to the world in the new documentary "Chinatown Rising" at the 4 Star Theater.

Harry and Josh's documentary uses the reverend's 16mm film and local TV station footage to showcase San Francisco Chinatown's rich history and journey in overcoming oppression through a rise in activism and sense of community.

The documentary also includes numerous interviews – including the reverend himself – from the Chinatown activists involved in the change of the neighborhood from the 1960s-'80s. Many of the interviewees still live in the City today.

For Harry, it was opportunity that inspired him and his son to finish the film project he had put aside since his college days. A Chinatown native, Harry worked in that community for many years as a minister as well as running a youth program at the local community center, the Cameron House, which is still active to this day. During that time, Harry used his camera to capture the transformation Chinatown was experiencing during those decades and the rise of the Asian American movement.

Harry was also able to use his film to advocate for the Chinatown community. Even now, as a westside resident, he is well known as a spokesperson and activist for the community. He has fought for many issues facing Chinatown residents, such as improving housing conditions and helping youth stay on a positive path. In the process, he found a deeper purpose for himself in Chinatown – helping the community stand up for itself.

"For the longest time, maybe for almost two centuries, Chinese people have had no voice," Harry said. "So, how do you give a voice to the community and help them have a voice themselves? That process takes a lot of time and a lot of work, and you have to develop a sense of trust in the people you're with."

Once a student in the film department at San Francisco State University, Harry hoped to put much of the footage he shot in Chinatown together for a final project in his film class. Due to the overwhelming amount of film he had recorded however, he was unable to do so. While the film footage sat in his garage for the next

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Looking Back

Kinen Carvala

Queen's Visit

Which U.S. president hosted a banquet for 260 guests in Golden Gate Park?

In early 1983, Queen Elizabeth II toured California for the first time. Her itinerary included a state dinner on March 3 in her and Prince Phillip's honor at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum (as it was known at the time), according to the presidential diary.

The dinner menu included lobster terrine with golden caviar, consomme of pheasant, quenelles of goose liver, loin of veal with morel and balsam sauce. The Saint Francis Hotel catered the meal and provided the china, silver and crystal, according to Enid Nemy writing for the New York Times. The U.S. State Department paid for the food, estimated at $70 a plate by food experts, reported Donnie Radcliffe for the Washington Post.

Invited guests to join the Queen and host President Ronald Reagan included:

- Paul Berg, Stanford professor and Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry.
- Dianne Feinstein, mayor of San Francisco.
- Ed Zschau, entrepreneur and San Francisco representative in Congress.
- George Deukmejian, governor of California.
- Ted Koppel, journalist.
- Joe Montana, 49ers quarterback voted the most valuable player in the 1982 Super Bowl.
- Willie Mays, SF Giants player inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1979.
- Thomas W. Chinn, Chinese American historian.
- Shirley Temple Black, diplomat and former child actress.
- Natalia Makarova, ballerina and choreographer.

The museum's newest exhibit then had horse drawings by Leonardo da Vinci lent by the United Kingdom,.Members of the San Francisco Symphony and San Francisco Opera performed at the dinner event.

Half a mile away from the museum, by Lincoln Way and Ninth Avenue, more than 5,000 people were protesting, according to the San Francisco Chronicle, but the protestors were too far away to be heard by the dinner guests, reported Radcliffe. At the protest, free meals of hot dogs and potato salad were provided by Irish Northern Aid as part of an Irish Republican Committee coalition to contrast with the Queen's banquet, as reported by the Chronicle and SF Examiner. Activist groups to protest the state dinner were granted permits by San Francisco Recreation and Park Department on Feb. 10, 1983, according to a compilation of 102 pages posted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) online records site, The Vault, on May 23, 2023, according to CNN. The activists were described by the FBI as "traditional leftist groups" including Livermore Action Group, National Lawyers Guild, American Indian Movement, gay and lesbian groups, "and other local activists."

England's Queen Elizabeth II and U.S. President Ronald Reagan share a toast at a banquet held at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in Golden Gate Park on March 3, 1983. ***Photo courtesy of the National Archives.***

The Livermore Action Group engaged in civil disobedience protesting nuclear weapons, including blocking an entrance to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in March 1982, according to former member Ken Butigan.

The National Lawyers Guild provided legal services for the anti-nuclear movement, according to the Guild's website. The Guild's National Immigration Project represented refugees from Central American countries such as Nicaragua and El Salvador undergoing civil war, with Cold War thinking often determining which side received American support.

The American Indian Movement (AIM) brought attention to Native American issues after a 19-month occupation of Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay from 1969 to 1971. The occupation of Wounded Knee (South Dakota) in 1972 led to a 10-week armed standoff with law enforcement, and within two years, most AIM leaders were jailed, underground or dead, according to researchers Jeffrey Stotik, Thomas E. Shriver and Sherry Cable. FBI infiltration of AIM came to light in 1975, when Douglass Durham revealed his dual roles of FBI paid informant and chief aide to the AIM co-leader, according to John Kifner, a reporter for the New York Times.

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) was described in the February 1983 issue of the New York Times Magazine as "the century's most virulent epidemic" with "big-city homosexual communities" particularly hard hit. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) had difficulty in tracking the spread of AIDS. When the CDC's AIDS task forces were doing contact tracing in 1981, important information like names of an infected person's sexual partners were not always attainable – e.g., infected people met strangers at a gay bathhouse or bar – though some people came forward with names.

During a White House press briefing on Oct. 15, 1982, reporter Lester Kinsolving asked Press Secretary Larry Speakes for reaction to CDC's announcement of AIDS as an epidemic. The press secretary replied he didn't think anyone in the White House knew about it, according to an excerpt from the documentary "When AIDS Was Funny," by Scott Calonico.

The FBI also expected Irish Northern Aid to participate in the Golden Gate Park protest. At a different stop on the Queen's San Francisco visit, Irish Northern Aid leader Seamus Gibney screamed "stop that torture," referencing claims over British government treatment of captured Irish Republican Army (IRA) members during "the Troubles," a decades-long conflict over Northern Ireland continuing at the time of the banquet, reported Nemy.

Out of the island of Ireland's 32 counties, 26 mostly Catholic counties seceded from the U.K. after World War I, eventually becoming the independent Republic of Ireland, while six counties remained in the U.K. as a Protestant-dominated region called "Northern Ireland." Tensions there rose between people who wanted to join the Republic of Ireland or remain in the U.K. especially after British troops fired on unarmed Catholic civil rights protestors in 1972, an event known as "Bloody Sunday." Paramilitary groups, e.g, the secessionist IRA and pro-British Ulster Defence Association, became more active. (Although the IRA is pro-Irish, the Republic of Ireland is not pro-IRA.) In 1998, the Troubles resolved with the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement, which created new structure for British and Irish cooperation and identities in Northern Ireland.

While an investigation by the Christian Science Monitor found that some Irish Northern Aid funds did reach charity programs for prisoners, U.S. District Court Judge Charles S. Haight Jr. wrote in a May 1981 ruling that Irish Northern Aid was acting as an arm of the IRA.

Prince Phillip, Queen Elizabeth's husband, lost his uncle Lord Louis Mountbatten in a 1979 IRA bombing.

The same FBI documents ("The Vault") also described a planned threat to Queen Elizabeth II's yacht when passing under the Golden Gate Bridge. The bridge's walkways were closed for the royal yacht, and no threat materialized.

Nevertheless, with respect to the San Francisco Irish community, the FBI wrote "the opportunity to demonstrate against the queen will be hard for most Irish to pass up" but protests were expected to be non-violent. The FBI acknowledged the "wide variety of interests of the groups involved in the protests against both the visit of the queen and the president."

Queen Elizabeth died on Sept. 8, 2022, at age 96 at Balmoral Castle, under medical care. Ronald Reagan served two terms as the 40th president of the U.S. from 1981 to 1989 after serving two terms as governor of California from 1967 to 1975. He died on June 5, 2004 at age 93 at his Los Angeles home.

The museum building that hosted the Queen's dinner contained both the de Young Museum and the Asian Art Museum. Damaged by the 1989 earthquake, the building was reconstructed starting in 2002 with the replacement opening in 2005. The new building is vastly different from the one Queen Elizabeth II visited, and the Asian Art Museum relocated to Civic Center.

The de Young museum is on the north side of Golden Gate Park's Music Concourse with a parking garage entrance at Fulton Street and 10th Avenue.

Find an archive of Kinen Carvala's "Looking Back" columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

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Supervisor Connie Chan

Budget Transparency

San Francisco is facing an unprecedented budget deficit and a public health crisis on our streets. During last month's budget negotiations, as chair of the Budget and Appropriations Committee, I worked to ensure our City's budget process would bring accountability and transparency to our city spending, refocus our efforts on providing quality and timely city services, and deliver a San Francisco budget that allows all San Franciscans to thrive.

We must face the moment, but also look to the future to help our economy and its residents recover.

Every year in June, the mayor presents her budget to the Board of Supervisors to begin its work, combing through the mayor's proposed budget. This year, a priority for the Board was to restore millions in funding that the mayor had cut for food security, children, youth and families, and housing and homelessness.

As Budget chair, my approach to tackling our City's overwhelming budget deficit and meeting the demands of our City was to hold city departments and ourselves accountable for the deliverables of city services, demanding transparency about city operations and spending.

To ensure city departments were delivering services in an efficient manner, I analyzed our city departments and their budgets in three categories.

For our public safety departments, city departments like police, fire and the department of emergency management, I looked for their budgets to include a baseline budget for daily operation but also a budget that is adaptive and flexible enough to include contingencies to tackle crises and disasters like gun violence, wildfires, storms and earthquakes.

And when I think of city departments providing general services, like those under the purview of our city administrator, or city departments like the SF Public Works Department, Planning Department and Department of Building Inspection, I expect stabilized spending and budgeting to keep the City's daily operations efficient and consistent.

When I think about city departments like the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families and the Department of Early Childhood, those are investments in our future, and they should be increasing their budgets and continuing investments and resources for our children and youth. After all, they are our future.

To balance all three categories, I reviewed our overall spending for government efficiency to reduce costs that don't contribute to core city services. Through the Board's budget process, I combed through non-personnel spending for all city departments to ensure the departments were budgeting overhead costs wisely.

I also worked with my colleagues to review the departments' deliverables of all programming and contracts, and considered eliminations or phase-outs if there were no demonstrable results according to contract terms or performance audits – especially for those that did not meet their goals for more than two fiscal years. Additionally, we weighed scaling back spending that our departments took on during the pandemic, and halting spending increases for city departments until we have a better forecast of our tax revenues.

Earlier this year, the Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office, Mayor's Budget Office and the controller published a five-year budget outlook update that highlighted policy decisions our city leadership has prioritized, including annualization of police and public works supplementals, the extension of downtown ambassador programs, maintaining shelter capacity and tax change proposals. These decisions have a significant fiscal impact and are all issues we seriously considered as we worked through this year's budget process.

We know our budget must also face the crisis of our street conditions head on, while ensuring our taxpayer dollars are efficiently spent on services.

We must address the harm of fentanyl on our community, and the realities of supply and demand that are deeply rooted in our drug problems. We must be honest about the need for effective public health solutions to lower demand, just as we must be honest about long-term public safety strategies to tackle the challenges of relentless supply. We must target the actual supply sources that are so much more than what meets the eye on our streets.

We also have to recognize that we cannot arrest away the mental health crisis that we are witnessing on our streets. Not only is incarceration inhumane, but it is also not economical. Incarceration takes a toll on our communities, and it has both moral and economic costs for all of us. When we invest so much in our system to provide services and support, yet we see so little results in return, we must ask the tough questions about accountability.

A system that lacks accountability and transparency, whether it's criminal justice or public health, is what is really killing people.

We need to refocus our government on what we are charged to deliver – quality and timely core city services. That is what our residents, businesses and communities demand, whether we are talking about downtown economy, business growth or vibrant neighborhoods. An efficient and transparent city government is what will bring us the recovery that we deserve.

These are the guiding principles that weighed into our considerations as we worked to produce a budget that reflects the shared priorities that we collectively fight so hard for.

Connie Chan represents District 1 on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. She can be reached at 415-554-7410 or chanstaff@sfgov.org. Find an archive of her columns online at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Marshall's Beach

Continued from page 1

for the National Park Service for 25 years.

"The water just by gravity flew through a wooden flume all the way around the tip of Fort Point all through the Presidio, across the future Marina District several miles long," Martini said.

The flume was constructed by the Spring Valley Water Company and started in Lobos Creek which runs along the southern border of the Presidio.

Martini had other historical insights about Marshall's Beach, including details about its landscape. He said the Presidio, known for its multiple military fortifications and installations, placed a searchlight down by the beach at the turn of the century.

Most bunkers along the coast would have been constructed in the very late 1800s. Constructed in 1864, Battery West is the nearest military battery installation to the beach.

Sources add that along with the various military installations along the bluffs, the Frank Jones, a cargo ship headed out of port in San Francisco, wrecked by Marshall's Beach in late March 1877 due to a break in the tow lines from a tugboat. Pictures from the time of the wreck show the rugged shoreline in the foreground.

The National Park Service website offers a description of the rock face above the beach.

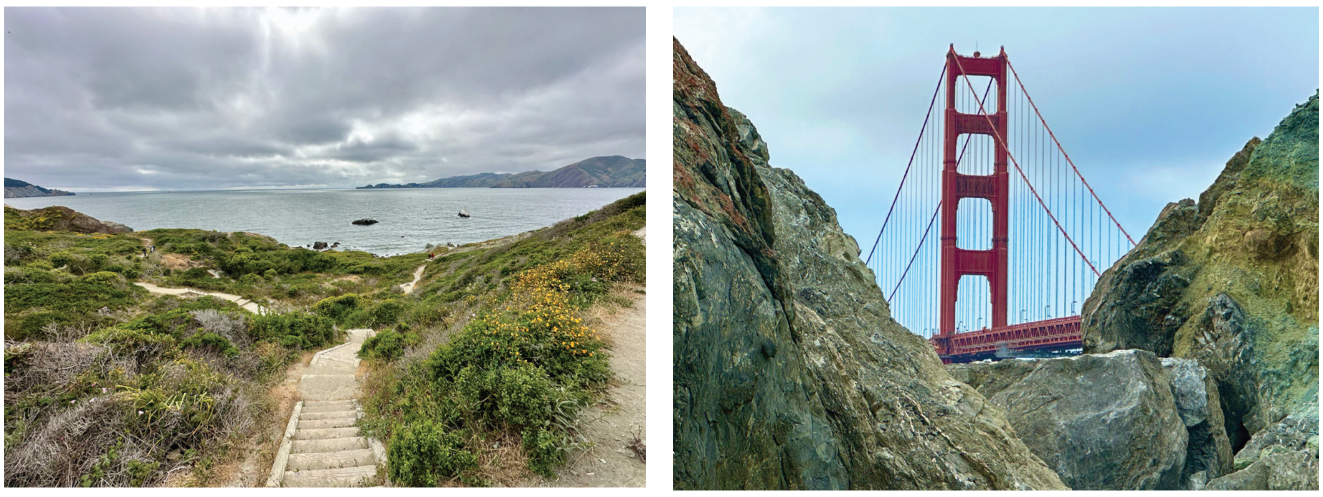
"The blue-green serpentinite rock seen here is part of a mélange, a mishmash of serpentinite, sandstone and soft mudstone deposits. The mélange likely formed when a variety of marine rocks slipped down into a deep-sea trench during giant earthquakes many tens of millions of years ago," according to the NPS website.

"The beach requires some effort to get to, however," the Fog City Secrets website says. "The path down to the beach from the bluffs above is long; coming back up is a real workout! But it's worth it."

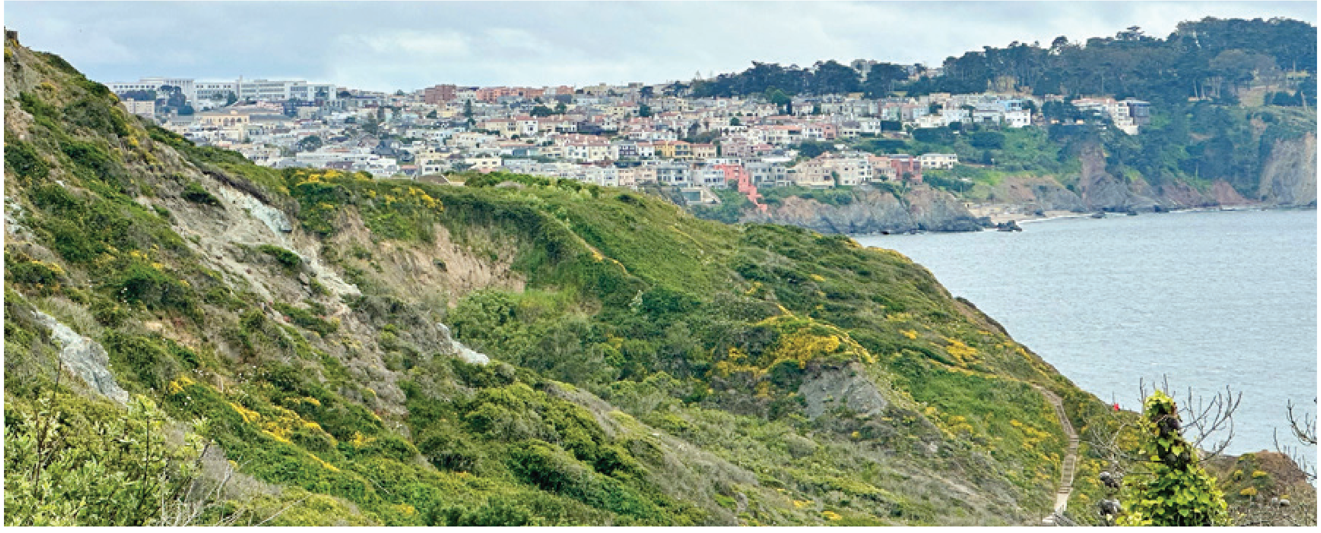
Due to its remote access, Marshall's Beach gained a reputation as an unofficial clothing-optional area. A nickname for the coastline is "bad boy beach," presumably because of the men who would gather there to take advantage of the lack of onlookers.

Marshall's Beach today is a popular hike-in destination for photographers and Golden Gate Bridge view seekers. Prior to all of this, notable photographer Eadweard Muybridge used Marshall's Beach as the stage for photos he took of Fort Point around 1869-1870. Muybridge is best known for his illustrative motion photography and had a significant array of photos during his time in San Francisco in the mid to late 1800s.

There is very little information surrounding the origins of the name of the beach. Marshall's Beach does not credit its namesake to a prominent politician or dairy farmer like its neighbor Baker Beach. Martini commented that there is suspicion around the name being given by locals and over the decades it ended up sticking. He describes that as far as what's known, the reason for the beach's name is lost in time, an apt case for SF's hidden beach.



Marshall's Beach offers a vantage point for unique views of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Pacific Ocean. *Photos by Michael Durand.*



The path down to Marshall's Beach provides a different perspective of the Richmond District and Seacliff neighborhood. George Washington High School is visible in the upper left corner.

Assembly

Assemblymember Phil Ting

New Hotline to Report Hate

Hate can happen while grocery shopping, commuting to work or walking around a park. Discrimination, bullying, harassment and assaults based on race, religion, sexual orientation and other acts of bias have been on the rise.

The last three years have been especially tough for Asian Americans/ Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) because a former U.S. president and others wrongly blamed this community for the COVID-19 pandemic. The rhetoric largely spurred attacks against Asians.

While 911 is always available for life-threatening situations, there's now a new non-emergency statewide hotline to report hate incidents, California vs. Hate. That number is 833-8NOHATE, or 833-866-4283, and is open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. -5 p.m. Care coordinators can provide assistance in more than 200 languages. And because victims may be afraid of law enforcement, the hotline workers can also facilitate involving the police or local prosecutors, if warranted. But people can also remain anonymous, if they choose. Online reporting is also available at CAvsHate.org.

As Assembly budget chair, I championed the $166.5 million Asian Pacific Islander Equity Budget, which includes $10 million for the creation and implementation of this hotline. We need a dedicated line to keep track of hate incidents because we can't solve a problem unless we know how big it is. The data collected will guide us in crafting policies and directing efforts toward stopping hate.

The hotline can also connect victims with programs to help them deal with the aftermath, including legal services, mental health support or housing. Some may not know what to do once they've experienced a hate incident, and we wanted to make sure they could move forward with experts who understand the network of resources available.

California vs. Hate builds on the work that Stop AAPI Hate started back in March of 2020. The organization provides an online tool where victims of Asian hate across the country could report their encounters. More than 11,000 incidents have been reported over a three year period. The number is likely higher because hate crimes/ incidents tend to be under-reported, as some fear law enforcement or retaliation. In San Francisco, city officials reported a 567% jump in 2021 of anti-Asian hate crimes.

Though the spike in cases involving hate against Asians led to the development of the new hotline, it is open to all communities. This is necessary because it's clear numerous groups could benefit. The latest California Department of Justice report shows hate crimes overall have surged nearly 33% – from 1,330 cases in 2020 to 1,763 – the following year. That's the sixth highest total recorded since the agency collecting this data in 1995. Among the highlights:

- Hate crimes against African Americans were most prevalent, rising 12.5% to 513 cases.
- Incidents motivated by sexual orientation jumped 50% to 303 cases.
- In the religious bias category, anti-Jewish events were up 32% to 152 cases.
- Latinos saw a nearly 30% increase with 152 cases.
- By far, Asian Americans saw the steepest climb, 177.5%, rising from 89 cases to 247.

In its first month of operation, the hotline is already proving to be a valuable tool. Preliminary data shows 180 incidents were reported statewide. Race and ethnicity were most commonly cited, followed by religion and sexual orientation.

If you experience a hate incident, I encourage you to contact the California vs. Hate hotline to not only report what happened to you, but to also get the support you need. Additionally, reporting your case will help policy makers, like me, get a fuller picture of hate in our state. This will, in turn, enable us to take more steps to address it.

Phil Ting represents the 19th Assembly District, which includes the west side of San Francisco along with the communities of Broadmoor, Colma and Daly City as well as part of South San Francisco. Find an archive of his columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Advocate Nancy Wuerfel Honored by Friends and SF Supervisors

By Thomas K. Pendergast

Her friends and admirers call Nancy Wuerfel a formidable advocate, master of the spreadsheets, a supernatural force, a secret weapon, the Sherlock Holmes of city bureaucracy and a fiercely independent woman dedicated to good city government.

At a June 13 meeting of the SF Board of Supervisors, Wuerfel was honored for her efforts with a resolution commending her for her "exemplary advocacy and stewardship in promoting preservation and conservation efforts in the City and County of San Francisco, recognizing her significant contributions to historic preservation, environmental protection, neighborhood-based planning and expressing gratitude for her dedicated service to the citizens of San Francisco."

District 3 Supervisor Aaron Peskin, who sponsored the resolution, said he met her in 2001 after he first became a San Francisco supervisor.

"She was in essence my secret weapon, as this Board of Supervisors stood up to the Federal Aviation Administration, Gov. Gray Davis, then (State Sen.) John Burton and Mayor Willie Brown, oh, and President George Bush. They were dead set on filling in two square miles of the bay for additional runway separation, which now is a thing of the past, as we spent way less money than the $10 billion that project would have cost and now have radar technology that can solve most of the problem," Peskin said. "Nancy was at the forefront of that fight and did things that I don't think I've ever seen anybody do, which was to read bond prospectuses and tease out things that were dynamite for this supervisor at the time."

She was also a columnist and opinion

Continued on page 11

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- David

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Real Estate

John M. Lee

Mid-Year Real Estate Update

As I write this column, the first half of 2023 is just about over. Each year has its own challenges and this year we have been dealing with rising inflation, higher interest rates, a volatile stock market and the seemingly never-ending battle with crime, homelessness and drugs in San Francisco. So where is the real estate market at?

I analyzed the single-family home markets in the Richmond and Sunset districts, because these two markets generally track very closely together, and compared them against the data in San Francisco.

For the first six months of 2023, 61 single-family homes sold in the Richmond, as compared to 107 in 2022, a 43% decrease! The median price went from $2.55 million in 2022 to $2.33 million in 2023, a decrease of 8.6%. The median number of days on the market increased from 12 to 15. Thus, we had a substantially lower number of sales, lower prices and a slightly longer amount of marketing time in the Richmond.

In the Sunset, 147 homes sold during the first six months of 2023 versus 225 in 2022, a decrease of 34.7%. The median price dropped from $1.828 million in 2022 to $1.51 million in 2023, a decrease of 17.4%. The median number of days on the market went from 11 to 13. In the Sunset, we also have fewer homes selling, a decline in prices and also a slightly longer marketing period.

In San Francisco as a whole, the number of single-family home sales decreased by 32.1%. The median price dropped by 19.5%, and the marketing time went from 12 to 14 days. So, the trend is comparable to the Richmond and Sunset districts.

We can conclude that the real estate market in the first half of 2023 was very slow, despite the fact that the major stock indexes dropped in March but then came back to either about the same or up substantially to about 25% for the year, and the mortgage interest rates stayed in the 6.5 to 7% range. Inflation is finally coming down with all the Fed Funds rate increases. The Fed stopped increasing interest rates but signaled that there might be a couple more coming up, depending on the future inflation numbers.

As mentioned many times before, real estate is a lagging economic indicator, meaning that all the other indicators will turn positive before the real estate market. It tends to lag by about six months to a year. So now with the other indicators turning positive, we might be looking at a bottom in real estate toward the end of the year. Also, we normally get the best prices in the springtime, with prices trending somewhat lower through the summer. This timing feels about right.

With the mortgage rates going from about 4% to 7% in the last 12 months, this translates roughly to about a 28% loss in purchasing power. We are fortunate that prices have not dropped this much yet. Much of that can be attributed to the lower interest rate environment we have gone through prior to this increase.

People who bought a home recently or refinanced in the last few years are holding on to historically low mortgage rates and are reluctant to sell. If they need to, many choose to keep the property and rent it out. Others cannot afford to sell and buy something else with the higher interest rates, so they decide to stay. This leads to lower listing inventory, and buyers have to compete to purchase, thus keeping the prices from falling too much.

I think this trend will continue for the rest of the year and I will keep you updated on the market. As always, if you are thinking about buying and selling, I would strongly recommend that you consult with a Realtor, accountant and perhaps an attorney prior to making any major real estate decisions.

John M. Lee is a broker with Compass specializing in the Richmond and Sunset districts. If you have any real estate questions, call him at 415-465-0505 or email at johnlee@isellsf.com. Find an archive of John M. Lee's columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Richmond Homes Sold in June*

Address	Bed	Bath	Sq. Ft.	Price
5624 Fulton St.	3	2	1,635	1,430,000
75 Wood St.	4	2	1,548	1,435,000
455 27th Ave.	2	1	1,040	1,580,000
607 23rd Ave.	3	2.5	1,600	1,700,000
707 23rd Ave.	3	2	2,288	1,935,000
751 38th Ave.	3	3.5	2,111	2,300,000
840 42nd Ave.	4	3	2,218	2,330,000
675 23rd Ave.	4	3.5	2,420	2,650,000
262 32nd Ave.	3	2.5	2,490	2,650,000
481 36th Ave.	4	5.5	3,396	3,300,000
22 Roselyn Ter.	4	3.5	3,065	3,400,000
2740 Lake St.	3	3.5	3,600	4,525,000

**Partial listing. Source: M.L.S.*

Budget Cuts

Continued from page 1

school.

"And we also provide the academic support they need," she said. "We believe the district needs to prioritize this regardless of the funding that came down from the state. We believe this is a priority issue. If they prioritize this, I believe that they can find the money."

Laura Dudnick, the school district's interim communications director, said they are looking at ways to replace this money throughout the 11 affected high schools in the district.

"SFUSD is working closely with school sites to lessen the fiscal impact of declining enrollment, including having eligible schools apply for restricted funding in order to preserve continuity in service provision for students who are furthest from access," Dudnick said in an email.

"What we would like to see is that they fill this with funding so those don't get affected," Cusano said. "The cuts for the district overall for high schools' after-school (programs) is about $730,000, and we believe they can find that money in other ways."

Bishoy Abdelshaid oversees programs for the Richmond Neighborhood Center, which serves about 900 of the approximately 2,000 students at George Washington High School.

"We give pretty much about half the school some service, whether that be food and hygiene supplies, whether that be our programs like identity-based programs," Abdelshaid said. "That could be case management. It could be employment services. Almost 50% of the student body gets served by us."

He noted that they have about five staff members serving the high school, not including himself, although they work at multiple school sites.

"It's going to take a lot to figure out what programs are we going to cut. I think that the immediate need is scaling back immensely on clubs that are after school," he said. "Unfortunately, we have to figure out and really sacrifice, in terms of looking at some of the numbers, what are some of our clubs that really don't serve a large number of students and really maybe have to make some tough decisions on those clubs."

Abdelshaid said cutting after-school programs can have a domino effect; the fewer students they serve after school, the more it affects school-day relationships with the young people.

"We have 10th graders who spent most of middle school, if not all of it, at home," he said. "Now they're expected to be at a school with 2,000 kids and be able to be in a community with a diverse group of people with folks that they're not necessarily typically engaged with at home.

"Not to mention the intense burden that schools across the country have put on people in terms of this notion of during COVID youth fell behind in their educational journey and they're having to catch up," Abdelshaid said. "And so I think there's so much pressure on young people coming out of lockdown to adhere to, so many things around catching up on literacy, in math fields, and reading-based skills that I think there is a mental and social exhaustion that's coming with it."

The school district, however, is not the only source of money.

The San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) is a city department that contributes to the program as well.

Last fiscal year, the DCYF contributed $193,000, although this money is spread out over all the Richmond District school sites with after-school programs, according to their online records data base. Exact figures for each site are not given.

Maria Su, executive director of the DCYF, said they provide the "core funding for these programs and the school district supplements this funding.

"So, to the Richmond Neighborhood Center we allocate quite a large grant," Su said. "We give a very large grant to the neighborhood center because they provide a lot of different things. They do everything from services to elementary school kids, to middle school kids, to high school kids."

She said the program provides workforce development to help students get their first jobs, as well as tutoring or homework help.

Su also sees recovery from the pandemic shutdowns as crucial for students.

"When you isolate social beings, and children are very, very social, when you isolate social beings from interacting with their peers in social settings it does have a significant impact on their mental and emotional development," she said.

Aside from the social impacts, there is also learning loss.

"We have a formula on how to get back on track with learning loss. You can do intensive tutoring. You can do supports after school hours, supports during the summer months; it can get kids back on track," Su said.

"What is really hard, and we don't have a full formula for, is how to get kids emotionally and psychologically back on track. So, it's a difficult and it's a very individualistic strategy.

"If the child experiences isolation as very traumatic, they become stunted in their development because they're struggling to figure out how to deal with that moment in time. So we need to help them work through what happened during isolation," she said.

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POLICE BLOTTER

Aggravated Assault with a Knife, Child Endangerment: Unit Block of Shrader Street, May 29, 5:01 a.m.

Park Station officers responded to a report of an assault that occurred on the unit block of Shrader Street.

Officers contacted the victims and learned that one of the victims, an 8-year-old child, was riding on a bicycle with her father when the suspect cut her back with an object.

The father, fearing for his and his daughter's life, fled to the St. Mary's Hospital's emergency room where they were able to call the police.

While at the hospital, a security guard overheard the description of the suspect and informed officers that the suspect was possibly a patient who was inside the hospital about an hour prior to the incident.

Officers were able to review video surveillance footage, take still photos of the suspect and identify the suspect.

A few hours later, Park Station officers responded to the area of Fulton and Buchanan streets to investigate a report of a female subject with a knife. The description of the subject matched the suspect description of the incident on Shrader Street.

Northern Station officers detained and identified the subject without incident. Believing the detained subject was the suspect in the prior incident, Park Station officers coordinated a "cold show" in which the victim positively identified the suspect.

The suspect was arrested for the aggravated assault and child endangerment.

Burglary, Hot Prowl, Unlawful Entry: 100 Block of Cook Street, June 1, 5:05 a.m.

Park Station officers responded to a residence on the 100 block of Cook Street regarding a report of two subjects trying to break into an apartment building.

When they arrived, officers walked through the residence. While observing the back yard from an elevated viewpoint, they saw two subjects who matched the subjects initially described in the 9-1-1 call.

Officers summoned assistance from other officers. The two suspects were arrested.

Robbery: California Street and Presidio Avenue, June 10, 4:15 p.m.

The victim was on Muni bus with a friend. Sitting next to them were two suspects.

A confrontation ensued as suspect 1 thought the victim and friend were taking pictures of him.

The suspect took the victim's phone, checked to make sure there were no pictures, then returned the phone.

The second suspect then took the victim's phone and exited the bus with the victim following to get his phone back. Suspect 2 took a fighting stance. The victim retreated back onto bus.

Richmond officers tracked the phone and Tenderloin units detained the suspect.

Suspect 2 was arrested and booked at the Juvenile Justice Center.

The case was assigned to SFPD's Robbery Unit which is conducting the follow-up investigation.

Robbery With a Gun: 2600 Block of Geary Boulevard, June 11, 11:50 a.m.

Two suspects entered a retail store and said they were just browsing.

Suspect 1, who was carrying a duffle bag, took out an AR-type pistol and pointed it at the employee. Suspect 1 told the victim to open the stockroom door and asked him if he wanted to get shot.

The victim opened door in fear. The suspect told him to open the safe. The safe was open already. Suspect 1 told the victim to grab an empty box and fill it with Apple iPhones located in the safe while the second suspect was in the store lobby as a lookout.

The two suspects left the store on foot. Twenty-eight iPhones were stolen for a loss estimated at approximately $29,000.

The victim was rattled but unharmed.

The case was assigned to SFPD's Robbery Unit which is conducting the follow-up investigation.

Robbery With Force: Clement Street and 33rd Avenue, June 16, 6:05 p.m.

The victim was released from a hospital in the East Bay and took BART to the City to visit a friend.

The victim believed two suspects followed him on BART, then on Muni to Clement Street and 33rd Avenue where they attacked him.

Suspect 1 asked the victim for money and the victim refused. Suspect 1 then covered the victim's mouth with a towel and struck the victim with his knee in the victim's stomach.

Suspect 1 then took the victim's wallet from his person as suspect 2 attempted to take the victim's ring, unsuccessfully.

The case was assigned to SFPD's Robbery Unit which is conducting the follow-up investigation.

Find an archive of Police Blotter columns online: RichmondSunsetNews.com

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Commentary

Quentin L. Kopp

Tricky Top-Two Primary System

It was Oscar Wilde who observed: “Hear no evil, speak no evil and you won’t be invited to cocktail parties.” That underpins Mahatma Gandhi’s judgment: “Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes.”

Consider California’s so-called “top-two primary” election system, as rightfully analyzed last fall by Dan Walters, who began his journalistic career in 1960 at the Humboldt Times at age 16, and now expounds for CalMatters. It’s mostly fulfilled promises of sponsors in the June 2010 statewide election when voters approved it as Proposition 14. Our current governor, however, utilized it in 2018 by nurturing Republican candidate John Cox, so Cox could finish second and be crushed in November. Gavin Newsom, of course, didn’t want former L.A. Mayor and State Sen. Antonio Villaraigosa, a Democrat, in the runoff. Cox, naturally, was “no competition” as a Republican. Walters thinks “top two” is a more democratic method because they must attract a broader complement of voters. As an Independent since May 1985, I disagree. The system generates tricks like Newsom pulled in 2018.

It’s now almost 15 years since California taxpayers approved that $9.95 billion general obligation (aka “G.O.”) bond for an electrified high-speed rail system from SF to Anaheim via L.A. Even the bellicose climate-change bastion N.Y. Times now admits the cost projections widely used by engineers and project managers prove “the train could not be completed in this century.” (Voters would be assured it’d be completed by 2020.) The High-Speed Rail Authority now concedes a $113 billion total cost. There’s no money left, and President Joe Biden can’t help with more federal funds. Hasta la Vista! As a Daily Journal reader was reminded last December; “A billion here, a billion there and pretty soon you’re talking real money (as U.S. Sen. Everett Dirksen of Illinois once remarked!).” Even Morocco in North Africa started “bullet train” service in 2018.

Mike Soltis of Ypsilanti, Michigan asked in a letter to the Wall Street Journal on April 29 whether President Biden would “thank and invite to the White House any Congressional leaders who defend ‘democratic values’ by shouting him down with a bullhorn during his next State of the Union message?” They could initiate Nancy Pelosi, who shredded publicly then-President Trump’s State of the Union printed message after he delivered it in 2020.

I note that last month New York state legislators ended their session by voting to establish a commission to examine and report current effects of slavery, which would then be the basis of “reparations” for Blacks. New York prohibited slavery in 1827, but legislators clearly want to copy California which was never a slave state but compelled Chinese, Japanese, and “other children of Mongolian ancestry” to attend segregated schools in the 19th century. Whether Newsom would approve reparations legislation is unknown.

We do know our leader has proposed a U.S. Constitution Amendment to require universal background checks, raise the minimum age to buy a gun from 18 to 21, require a “reasonable” waiting period after purchase and before taking possession of a gun and prohibiting assault rifles in the U.S.A. An amendment requires approval from 2/3rds of Congressional members or 33 states to vote for it and request a Constitutional Convention. I can hardly wait for our governor to lobby Congressional members from Arkansas, Texas, Idaho, Alabama, Georgia, Oklahoma, Iowa or Florida, or to request approval of his nonsensical publicity act.

The 27th and last Constitutional Amendment occurred after ratification by the California State Legislature July 1, 1992, of a bill I introduced upon request from Ralph Nader, another Harvard Law School alumnus, and Paul Gann, co-author of Proposition 13 in 1978. It provides no law-varying compensation of senators and representatives shall take effect until an election of representatives has intervened: It was proposed Sept. 25, 1789 (!), with the first 10 Amendments even before North Carolina and Rhode Island ratified the Constitution, but was abated until Nader and Gann, inspired by a Texas University law student, took up the cause of allowing voters for House of Representatives incumbents to express their sentiments about voting themselves a pay raise.

As a retired judge, I’m embarrassed by the spectacle of U.S. District Court Judge Alleen Connor in Florida, one of the indicted ex-President Donald Trump’s 2020 judicial appointees, being designated by random assignment to preside at his trial by jury on 37 criminal counts. She already ruled in Trump’s favor in a case he brought last year objecting to the FBI’s search at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida and was overruled by the U.S. Court of Appeals which opined there was no justification for treating Trump differently than any other object of a search warrant. (Two of the appellate court panel members were Trump-appointed and the third was appointed by George W. Bush). Judge Cannon should recuse herself because a federal trial court judge can preempt the jury and acquit “bone spur” Trump of some or all of the 37 counts against him. Remember that a judge is an official who should lay down the law, not lay down on the law!

That’s why Independence Day reminds me of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s July 6, 1935, letter to Representative Samuel B. Hill: “I hope your committee will not permit doubts as to constitutionality, however reasonable, to block the suggested legislation.”

Quentin Kopp is a former San Francisco supervisor, state senator, SF Ethics Commission member, president of the California High Speed Rail Authority governing board and retired Superior Court judge.

‘Chinatown’ Film

Continued from page 1

few decades, Harry never gave up on the idea of one day finishing his project.

Four years ago, everything changed. It started when Josh, a professional filmmaker, found his father’s film footage while helping him clean out his garage.

Josh recalled watching the footage with his dad.

“There wasn’t much else out there in the world that was like this footage,” Josh said. “And then I started asking questions and hearing the stories from him, and we decided to start talking to some of his friends from the time.”

From then on, Josh and his dad would work on the film together. For Josh, this project helped him see his dad and his life in a whole other way.

“I never asked about his life, and he didn’t just volunteer information about what he’d accomplished and what he’d done,” Josh explained. “Pretty much most of what I learned about him, I learned from this project that we started when he was 80 years old. That’s one of the things I’m most grateful for while doing this project was learning about his life and learning about his efforts for the community.”

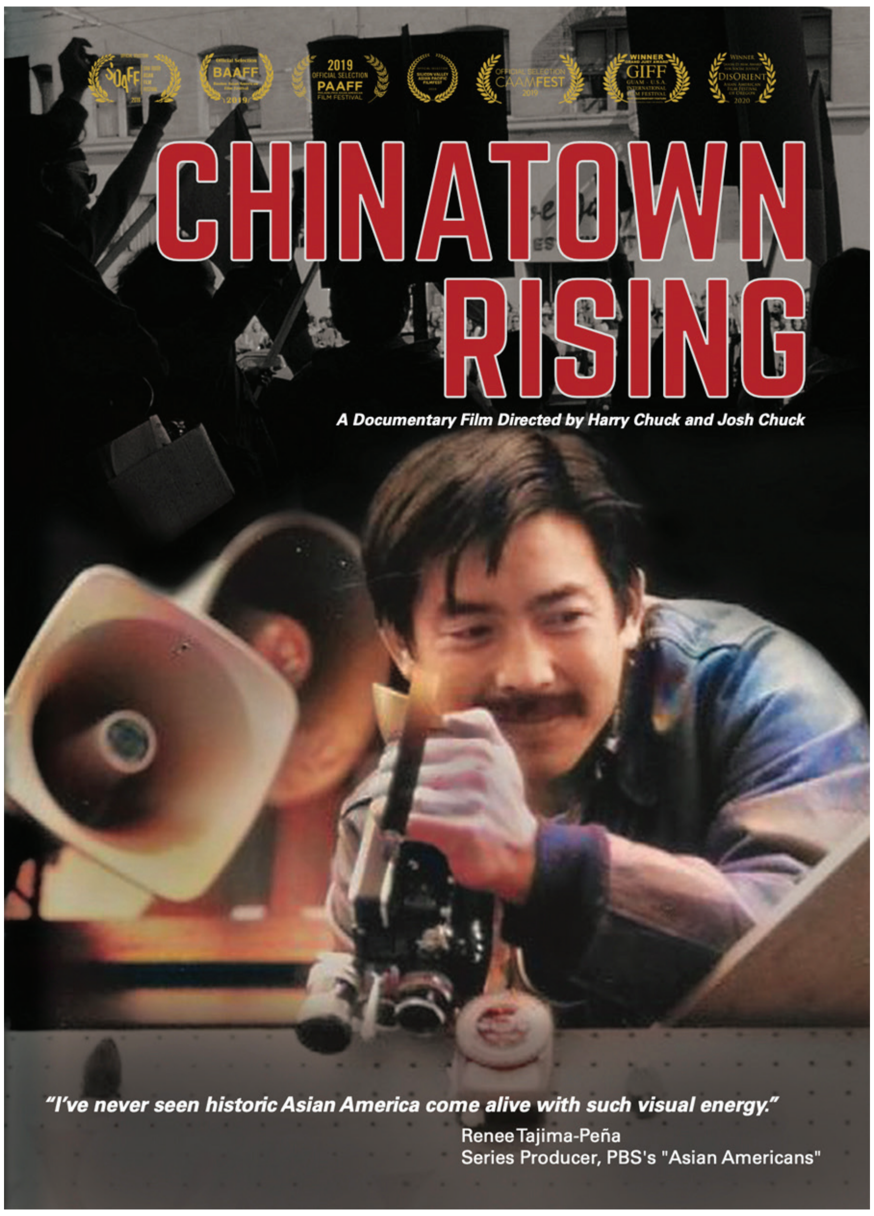
Harry and Josh hope to reach a broader community through this film.

“I think it’s a story of an immigrant community,” Josh said. “And everywhere you go in this country, you find immigrant communities. A lot of them are still in their stages of development, you know some are brand new and some are in their second or third generation. But you find and what we’ve heard from different audiences is that a lot of the issues they have are very similar. They’re parallel. The challenges that immigrants face here are deep.”

Sharing his hopes for the film’s reception, Harry talked about helping the new generations understand the importance of community and fighting for it.

“I think people are aware that times are changing,” he said. “It’s easy to forget that the most important thing we have is community. And that we all live in that community. We’re hoping that our film will help people to better appreciate their communities, be mindful that we are all a part of it and that it takes work to keep it strong.”

“Chinatown Rising” will be showing at the 4 Star Theater July 14-16. For more information, go to chinatownrising.com.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CHINATOWN RISING
A Documentary Film Directed by Harry Chuck and Josh Chuck
“I’ve never seen historic Asian America come alive with such visual energy.”
Renee Tajima-Peña
Series Producer, PBS's "Asian Americans"

“Chinatown Rising” is a father and son film project that uses archival footage to tell the story of the Chinese immigrant experience from the 1960s to the ’80s. The documentary will be shown at the 4 Star Theater July 14-16. *Photo courtesy of “Chinatown Rising.”*

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New Murder Charge Filed Against Exploded Hash Oil Lab Suspect

By Thomas K. Pendergast

The man whose Sunset District house blew up in February, after butane vapors from an allegedly illegal hash oil lab exploded and killed his wife, now faces a murder charge for her death.

Darron Price, 54, was initially charged with involuntary manslaughter, manufacturing a controlled substance, four counts of reckless burning, two counts of child endangerment and one count of elder abuse. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges.

The allegation of involuntary manslaughter has been replaced by the murder charge. His wife, Rita Price, 51, reportedly suffered a stroke eight years ago and required an at-home caretaker, so both she and her caretaker were in the house at the time.

Authorities believe Price was illegally manufacturing hash oil for sale in the Sunset home's lower level, and the caretaker inadvertently caused the blast by turning on a dryer, which ignited lingering butane fumes.

According to media reports the caretaker was badly burned but survived.

"The People argued that Mr. Price took a dangerous and deadly risk to human life and safety, knowing that his wife and her caretaker were home in the middle of a dense residential community," Randy Quezada, communications director for the San Francisco District Attorney's Office, stated in an email.

Price's two children, ages 14 and 17, were at school when the explosion happened.

According to the San Francisco DA's office, investigators recovered "suspected butane tanks, ovens and other materials consistent with processing hash oil with volatile solvents."

The SF Standard reported that prosecutors allege Price was aware of the danger he was putting his family and the neighborhood in, based on conversations Price had with federal agents nearly a decade ago about the danger of hash oil production and its potential for fatal explosions.

The San Francisco Public Defender's Office declined comment for this article, however, Price's attorney, Public Defender Sierra Villaran, told ABC 7 news that she believes he is innocent and should not be in custody.

"We strongly believe in Mr. Price's innocence. We believe that he should be out of custody. I do not believe he poses any danger to the public," she said.

The SF Standard reported Villaran told them that what the government is providing as "hard evidence and information is in fact a farce. These were offhand comments at best reportedly told the SF Standard that none of the conversations between Price and federal law enforcement officers were recorded or documented and happened almost 10 years ago," adding that there was one sole comment which could be construed as knowledge of the danger.

KRON 4 news reported that a couple whose home next door was destroyed by the explosion has filed a lawsuit against the owners of the residence.

David Garth and his wife Nang Phommavongsay told the news station that their home was ruined, and their lives forever changed after the explosion "leveled the home to its foundation."

The defendants are identified in court documents as Peter De Martini and Diane De Martini. The De Martinis live nearby to the residence, and the court filing alleges they often walked by to check in and talk with Price.

"The behavior exhibited by the defendants is nothing short of shocking. Allowing a tenant to operate a highly dangerous drug lab in your garage is a ticking time bomb. Their neighbors David and Nang are lucky to be alive, and their lives are forever marked by this tragic event. They were left with nothing," the couple's attorney, David Hollenberg of Cotchett, Pitre and McCarthy, reportedly said.

The Garth Phommavongsay family did not specify the amount they are asking for in damages. However, court documents list medical expenses, past and future loss of earning as well as general and punitive damages to be considered by the court.

The initial incident report provided by the San Francisco Fire Department details some of the damages connected to the explosion. An estimated $5.5 million in property damage occurred on the street after the explosion, and an additional $2.3 million in personal property was also damaged. An estimated 15 homes faced various levels of damage after the fire, according to KRON 4 news.

Press Release

SFPD

Fatalities in Richmond District Assault

911 Call Regarding an Aggravated Assault Leads to a Richmond District Officer Involved Shooting

On Thursday, June 22, at approximately 2:39 a.m., San Francisco police officers from Richmond Station were dispatched to a residence on the 700 block of 31st Avenue for a report of an aggravated assault in progress.

An officer arrived on scene and made contact with an 84-year-old male victim in the doorway of the home. During the interaction, the 37-year-old suspect, who was armed with a knife, advanced toward the officer and the victim from inside the home and an officer-involved shooting occurred. Additional officers arrived on scene and began rendering aid to the suspect and summoned medical personnel to the scene.

The victim told officers that the suspect had assaulted a 76-year-old female victim inside the home. Officers entered the home and discovered the female victim deceased. A dog was also found deceased inside the home. Medics transported the suspect to a local hospital where he was later pronounced deceased. The male victim was transported to a local hospital and treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

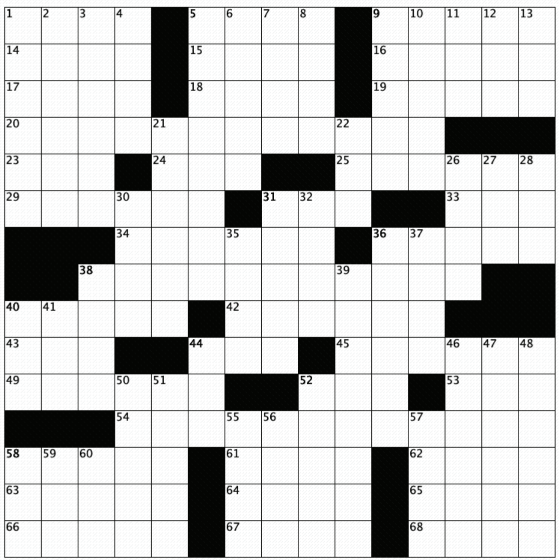
This incident is being investigated by the San Francisco District Attorney's Office; San Francisco Police Department Investigative Services Division (ISD); SFPD Internal Affairs Division (IAD); Department of Police Accountability (DPA); and Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME).

Additional information will be released as it becomes available. As part of SFPD's commitment to transparency and accountability, a town hall meeting regarding this officer-involved shooting was scheduled for June 30.

July 2023 Crossword

Jess Goldstein

ACROSS
1. Big celebration
5. GQ and TV Guide, e.g.
9. "Buy U a Drank" artist
14. Brainfreeze beverage
15. Et ___ (and others, in Latin)
16. Get out of bed
17. First part of a play
18. Indication
19. Correct
20. Park on Point Lobos Avenue
23. Fluency subj.
24. Compose
25. To the greatest extent
29. Viewed to be
31. Mealtime neckwear
33. Had charge of
34. Heavy burdens
36. Makes cuts?
38. San Francisco's national park
40. "Don't Pass Me By" singer
42. 1980s consoles
43. Be under the weather
44. AOL chitchat
45. On the beach
49. Holy ___! (Sunset spot for frozen treats)
52. Brian of rock music
53. Cleaning cloth
54. Park just north of a Richmond District Slow Street
58. Dance fitness program
61. "Sun Salutation" program
62. "Takes care of," in slang
63. Pointed at
64. Like 22 or 24
65. Take wing
66. Orchard fruit
67. Damages
68. 2's place in 123



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DOWN
1. Partisan
2. Point a finger at
3. Put down roots
4. First in line
5. Overlaid, as songs
6. Not of this world
7. Model Hadid
8. Performed karaoke
9. "The Secret History" author Donna
10. Simple geometric solid
11. Bailed-out insurance co.
12. "Sort of" suffix
13. It's left after spending
21. Lesser-known band at a concert
22. Nerve center
26. Hodgepodge
27. Bump, ___, spike!
28. QB's stat
30. Comic Jay of 90s "SNL"
31. Golden or red vegetables
32. "Insecure" creator Rae
35. Shimano competitor
36. Guy with a bright idea?
37. "Spill the tea!"
38. Hard to believe, as a tale
39. Tehran residents
40. Droop
41. Most common outcome in a game of Rock–Paper–Scissors
44. Debt note
46. Word preceding Park or Arena
47. Collect, as profits
48. Gets rid of
50. 311 song about the "color of your energy"
51. Bumpy amphibians
52. Beaver state?
55. Denial from Dostoyevsky
56. "Shana ___!"
57. Advanced cheerleading maneuver
58. Cook in the microwave
59. 180 on the road
60. Combat sport, for short

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMENTARIES AND LETTERS

From the editor: All commentaries we publish are the opinions of the writers and should not be considered our editorial stances on issues. We strive to remain neutral and offer a balance of viewpoints. We invite readers who wish to express their opinions to send a letter to the editor to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Word limit for the newspaper is 350, for the website, 500. RichmondSunsetNews.com.

EVENTS AT THE PRESIDIO

Upcoming events at the Presidio include:

- “Fiesta en el Parque – Presidio Sunday Afternoons” Telemundo and NBC Bay Area invite everyone to a family-friendly fiesta in the Presidio. Come enjoy Aztec dancing by Calpulli Tonalehqueh, Latin music with DJ Alex Merino, Banda performances and more! Plus, enjoy delicious food from vendors at Presidio Pop Up. Hosted by Partnership for the Presidio. Presidio Tunnel Tops, 210 Lincoln Blvd., Sunday, July 9, 1-5 p.m. Free, but registration is required: presidio.gov/events/fiesta-en-el-parque-2023-07-09.
- “Presidio’s National Night Out”

Join the National Park Police, National Park Service and the Presidio Trust for National Night Out. It is a chance for the park emergency personnel and our Presidio neighbors to get to know each other through fun activities and demonstrations. This is a free event for the whole family which includes demonstrations, giveaways and food trucks. Here’s your chance to learn more about fire prevention, child safety and experience the U.S. Park Police Horse and Canine divisions up close. Presidio Main Parade Lawn, Tuesday, Aug. 1, 4-7 p.m., free. For more information, go to presidio.gov/events/national-night-out.

FELTON’S TECH SQUAD

Felton’s Tech Squad is providing free basic tech support for older adults and people with disabilities in the Richmond District. Ask questions regarding how to navigate your smartphone, tablet or laptop. Learn basic skills on your smartphone and tablet.

- Friday, July 7, 1:30-3 p.m. at the Richmond Library (351 Ninth Ave.). Drop in for a one-on-one session in English, Cantonese and Mandarin.
- Six-week tablet training class in English at the Richmond Library on Fridays, July 14, 21 and 28 and Aug. 4,11 and 18, 1:30-3p.m.

For more information, call 415-474-1558 or email techsquad@felton.org.

FREE EVENTS AT THE SF PUBLIC LIBRARY, RICHMOND BRANCH
351 NINTH AVE., 415-355-5600

CHILDREN/FAMILY PROGRAMS:

“Storytime.” Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11-11:30 a.m.

“Performance: Boswick’s Reading Circus.” Take an imaginary journey to the reading circus with former Ringling Brothers clown Boswick. There’s magic, juggling, silliness and lots of laughter. For children 5 and older. Saturday, July 8, 1–2 p.m.

“Poetry with Pauline.” Study poems and help write a chapbook. Librarian Pauline with MFA in Poetry Writing will publish your poems in a format you can take home. Drop in or attend all six sessions. For ages 9–12. Meets once a month, continuing on Thursday, July 13, 4-5 p.m.

“Activity: Marble Machine.” Design a contraption to roll marbles, built with everyday materials and your imagination. For ages 6-10. Wednesday, July 19, 1–3 p.m.

“Activity: Lego Free Play.” Build skyscrapers, forts, castles or whatever your imagination desires with LEGO. For ages 5 and older. Tuesday, July 25, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

TEEN PROGRAM:

“Button-Making.” Make your own buttons to pin to your clothes or bag. Show it off or give them to friends. Supplies limited. For ages 13–18. Thursday, July 20, 3-4 p.m.

“Activity: YELL Presents.” YELL interns will create a Make + Do program to be decided. Saturday, July 22, 3–5 p.m.

ADULT PROGRAMS:

“Live Music: Echo’s Bones, woodwind trio.” Indoor performance by this accomplished trio whose music lies somewhere between jazz and classical. Leader Sheldon Brown is a regular member of the touring band of Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead. Saturday, July 1, 2–3 p.m.

“Breath meditation with Don Narin.” Guided meditation for calming and stress release. Every Thursday, 11-11:30 a.m.

“Gentle Yoga with Don Narin.” Yoga anyone can do. Bring your own mat or use a library chair. Every Thursday, 11:45 - 12:30 p.m.

“Drop-In Tech Support for Older Adults.” Friday, July 7, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

“Author: Wang Yiming.” A virtual program with this renown Dallas-based acupuncturist and Beijing University of Chinese Medicine graduate, exploring “the essence of acupuncture is promoting self-cure.” Register on the library’s website to attend this Zoom program or come to the branch for registration assistance. Sunday, July 9, 10 a.m.–noon.

“Read Together, Silent Book Club.” Bring any book (fiction or nonfiction) for a period of silent reading followed by a discussion when you share what you are reading with others. Club meets every other Wednesday. July 12 and 26, 3-5 p.m.

“Workshop: Formosan Landlocked Salmon Paper Craft.” Learn how to make a paper craft of Formosan Landlocked Salmon, or Taiwanese salmon, a freshwater salmonid fish endemic to Taiwan. All materials provided. Space is limited. Reservation required: 415-355-5600 or sign up at the reference desk. Tuesday, July 18, 2–4 p.m.

ADULT FILM PROGRAMS:

No films scheduled for July.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy July birthday to Thomas Beatty, Craig Bray, Mary Rose Buckley, Jean Williamson Carter, Patrick Craig, Steven Cresci, Hayleigh Evans, Laurel Evans, Allyssa Fielding, Claudia Martin Goldberg, Idris Sethi Iwata, Ti De Meo, Mackenzie Moore, Emma Nobuko Owan, Tom Pendergast, Dakota Blue Raymundo, Gianna Toboni, Jesse White and Michael D. Wong. *To add a name to the monthly birthday list, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Free.*

INTERNS WELCOME

The Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers offer unpaid summer internships to students looking for journalism experience and instruction. For more information, call 415-706-6428 or email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

MEET THE EDITOR OF THE RICHMOND REVIEW

Meet the editor of the Richmond Review: You are invited to meet with Michael Durand, editor and publisher of the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers and the RichmondSunsetNews.com website. Bring your story ideas, feedback, suggestions, questions, announcement items and advertising inquiries. We are also welcoming new writers and photographers interested in contributing stories and photos. One Richmond storefront, 802 Clement St., every second Wednesday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m. For more information, call 415-706-6428 or email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Scheduled appointments not necessary but appreciated.

NOONTIME CONCERTS

Noontime Concerts provides FREE live musical performances at Old St. Mary’s Cathedral every Tuesday at lunchtime as “San Francisco’s musical lunch break.” Noontime Concerts, a charitable educational institution, is dedicated to providing an accessible means for the public to experience, enjoy and learn about and appreciate the presentation of high-quality classical music performances for free on Tuesdays. Noontime Concerts also makes its audio visual recordings available on its website and on YouTube for a limited time.

July concerts at St. Mary’s Cathedral, 660 California St., 12:30–1:30 p.m.

- July 11: Midsummer Mozart Festival Chamber Players featuring: Brooklyn Snow, soprano; Matthew Greenblatt, tenor; Kirk Eichelberger, bass; and Paul Schrage, piano.
- July 18: Dr. Gabriela Calderón Cornejo, piano; Latin women composers.
- July 25: William Underwood III, flute.

PHILANTHROPIST NEEDED

I am a senior lady who needs a place to live at a private residence in the west area of San Francisco. After many months of fruitless searching, I need help from a private philanthropist in order to move beyond this crisis. Having arthritis, I don’t navigate many flights of stairs or hills. I use public transportation, live quietly, and have excellent references. Call 415-561-9275 if you or someone you know can provide me a home. Please help.

‘PHOTOS OF THE MONTH’ ONLINE GALLERY

Photographers are invited to submit three of their best photos for consideration to be published in the “Photos of the Month” gallery on RichmondSunsetNews.com. The website averages more than 20,000 views per month. Please submit photos as jpegs, 150 dpi, six inches wide. If you don’t know how to size your photos, we can help. While there is no compensation for the submissions, we are planning on awarding a gift to the best photo of the month in the near future. Please submit on or near the 15th of each month. For more information, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com or call 415-706-6428.

PLANNING ASSOCIATION FOR THE RICHMOND

Planning Association for the Richmond will hold its next general membership meeting on July 19, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Richmond Recreation Center, 251 18th Ave., between Clement and California streets. There will be presentations about homelessness and homeless support services by various city agencies. There will also be time for questions and answers and discussion. Everyone is welcome. For more information, go to sfpar.org.

RADIO SAILING FUN DAY

Chart a course for Spreckels Lake on Saturday, July 15, when the SF Model Yacht Club (SFMYC) will host a demonstration of radio-controlled model sailboat racing. “The boats are far from toys and sail just like full-size sailboats,” said Robert Weaver, commodore of SFMYC. Spectators will be treated to a series of handicap races between club members and will have opportunities to meet and talk with members of the club and to sail boats themselves with a bit of individual instruction. The event starts at 1 p.m. and will conclude around 3 p.m. Free.

REFUSE REFUSE CLEANUPS

Cleanups in the Richmond District:

Saturday, July 1, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Friday, July 7, 3:30-5 p.m., Clement Street Happy Hour Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/437706/.
Saturday, July 8, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Friday, July 14, 4-5:30 p.m., Outer Richmond Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/450069/
Saturday, July 15, 10–11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Sunday, July 16, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Urbana Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/568717/
Saturday, July 22, 10–11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Sunday, July 23, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Baker Beach Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/560617/.
Saturday, July 29, 10 a.m.–noon, Outer Richmond Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/450069/.
Saturday, July 29, 10 a.m.–noon, Richmond District Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/441884/.
Saturday, July 29, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.

SEEKING A ROOM TO RENT

I have lived in the Richmond District for 27 years in a rent-controlled building that was bought by new owners last year. They are offering me a buyout to vacate my flat and are intent on clearing the building for renovation, so I’m seeking a room for rent somewhere in the City. I am quiet, reliable about paying bills and have a good reference from my former landlord. I can afford $800 a month, not including utilities, and am fine with a small room. Please call 415-571-9989 if you have such a room available to rent.

SHOP-EAT-LOCAL-FIRST (SELF)

Attention Richmond District neighbors: The SHOP-EAT-LOCAL-FIRST (SELF) initiative has a new website! Discover a world of exclusive local deals, allowing you to save money while uplifting small businesses that are the heart and soul of our community. Explore job opportunities and access a wealth of community resources. Merchants, we invite you to join the SELF Program, where you can showcase your specialized offers and advertise for new staff. Reach out to us for more details, and let’s amplify your business’s impact. A limited number of SELF cards are available at the One Richmond office, 802 Clement St. For more information, email onerichmondsf@gmail.com or go to onerichmondsf.herokuapp.com.

STAMP COLLECTOR AND STAMP COLLECTIONS

Stamp collector is buying stamps and stamp collections. I am buying “older stamps” from the 1800s to 1930. American Philatelic Society member since 1986. Pictures are appreciated. Call or text message 415-533-0761.

Announcements: $1 per word, 20 word minimum. Share birthdays, weddings, an-

Continued on page 11

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Continued from page 10

niversaries, births, obituaries, graduations, sports highlights, business accomplishments, retirements, college admissions, etc.

FREE: Add a name to the monthly birthday list or submit free community events at no charge. We support small businesses: Free announcements for small businesses celebrating an anniversary or other significant milestone or event. Send announcement to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Announcements will run in the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers (36,000 copies) and on RichmondSunsetNews.com (20,000+ views per month). Ads must be pre-paid. Deadline: 20th of the month. Mail check to: P.O. Box 16035, S.F., CA 94116. Call 415-706-6428 or email editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com for more details.

Nancy Wuerfel

Continued from page 5

piece writer whose work appeared in the Richmond Review, Sunset Beacon and Westside Observer, where she supported and advocated for the expansion of the Emergency Firefighting Water Supply system as a separate set of water pipelines built to be robust enough to survive a major earthquake like the 1906 shaker, along with a seawater pump to supply it at Ocean Beach.

"Nancy was a formidable advocate because of her deep knowledge of the city's budget and policies," her friend Mary McAllister told the Board. "She was the master of the spread sheets that revealed how projects were funded and the economic interests that were involved.

"Nancy was my co-worker when she worked at San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH), and I was working at UCSF. We were both responsible for managing professional fee billing and reimbursement for services provided by doctors at SFGH and UCSF. I admired her understanding of the complexity of professional fee billing."

District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio shared a story of an encounter he had with her.

"When I was running for supervisor last year, I knocked on her door and I was probably talking to her for a good 45 minutes," Engardio said. "She grilled me on all manner of issues, and I appreciated how much she has served our City by being a budget hawk, by investigating the natural areas plan, by really pushing for better public safety on the west side when it comes to water and the fire department; I'm just really grateful for the work she's done.

"And I'm told that she's listening in right now and so Nancy, thank you for your service to San Francisco," he added.

Nancy Wuerfel was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

"I've known Nancy for almost 25 years," Sally Stephens said. "I've sat next to her at countless hearings here in City Hall and we've spent hours on the phone discussing strategy and politics. I've watched her organize community support and sometimes opposition to various proposed policies.

"She's helped me understand city budgets and how to figure out where the money goes. She was an early mentor when I began to get involved in animal, park and neighborhood issues; all areas with which she has had experience," Stephens said.

"She always backs up her positions with real data, looking up hard-to-find, decades-old original documents to see for herself what the facts actually were, not simply something what other people told her they were. She's a fiercely independent woman and I am honored to be her friend. I can't think of anyone more deserving of today's honor."

Another community advocate and activist, Katherine Howard, also gave her accolades.

"Nancy's not able to attend the hearing today but she is listening in," Howard said. "She has an amazing depth of knowledge about how the city of San Francisco works. Whenever I would call her about an issue, she'd list the city departments involved, what needed to be done, whom to contact and perhaps most intriguing, where the bodies were buried.

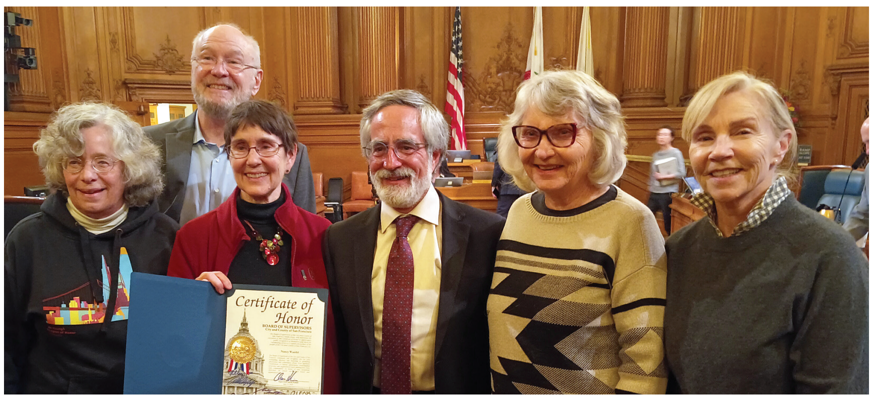
"As a member of the Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance, Nancy worked to prevent the Rec. and Park Department, from building a water-treatment plant on parkland, again in Golden Gate Park. The project included a chemical building and other important sites. As a result of community efforts, the SFPUC made a decision to move the project out of Golden Gate Park," she said.

"I want to thank you Nancy for all your work and for inspiring future generations to know that one person can make a difference," Howard said.

"She is a wonderful person," said Charles Head of the Sunset Heights Association of Responsible People. "She is a great authority. She is a supernatural force in San Francisco, and I commend her to you, I commend you for giving her this honor and God bless you all."

"Nancy is and has for decades been an exemplary citizen of this City, an advocate for good government, historic preservation and public safety," said Woody LaBounty, president and CEO of San Francisco Heritage. "Nothing gets by Nancy, and she always makes sure she has her receipts when she fights for what's right in San Francisco."

"I think her friend Tomasita Medál summed it up just right and I just wanted to read her words into the record," Peskin said. "Nancy Wuerfel was the Sherlock Holmes of city bureaucracy for decades. She set her magnifying glass on obscure volumes of city records to find corruption, contradictions, incompetence and malfeasance. She was a formidable champion of City efficiency. She is a legend and will always be remembered."



Friends of Nancy Wuerfel at the San Francisco Board of Supervisors meeting honoring her contributions to San Francisco. Left to right: Sally Stephens, Mark Duffett, Kathy Howard, District 3 Supervisor Aaron Peskin, Mary McAllister and Kathleen Bergerson. *Photo by Thomas K. Pendergast.*

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19th Annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival Offers 'Safe Spaces'

By Kate Quach

In the clustered streets of Singapore, a teenage Madeleine Lim runs an illegal LGBTQ+ rights organization. Her underground community organizing constantly places her in danger with the government which censors her films that depict the lives of individuals in the LGBTQ+ spectrum. So, when she begins her life in the United States, her mission becomes clear – calling for queer communities to gain full voice in the realm of film.

A decade later, this vision culminated into the Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP), an organization built to unify aspiring filmmakers of the San Francisco queer community, including the Sunset and Richmond districts.

This summer, the QWOCMAP Film Festival celebrated its 19th anniversary at the Presidio Theatre from June 9 through 11, audiences gathered at the historic theater to watch screenings of QWOCMAP's 2023 theme, "Forever Rooted." Scenes of Sunset neighborhood libraries and Richmond District street corners scattered themselves in films exploring queer identities, relationships, pain and joy. Conversations of disability justice paired themselves with stories of Indigenous history.

In Lim's earlier years of filmmaking, she held a hope to bump into someone who shared her identity as a queer woman of color in the film space and repeatedly wondered, "Where are we?" She carried this question at the tip of her tongue as she passed by groups of people during film festivals she attended. Her thoughts began to build upon each other and grew into determination.

"If we're not creating films of our lives, our communities and our experiences, who will?" she asked. "Are we going to wait until Hollywood gets it right one day?"

It didn't take Lim much longer to create the answer to her own questions – in 2000, she founded and launched QWOCMAP.

At the heart of QWOCMAP's mission lay free filmmaker training programs that Lim organized for queer women, gender nonconforming and non-binary individuals of color in San Francisco. Films produced through the workshops soon collected themselves into finished pieces, and in 2003, Lim found a home stage for them in a public showcase screening.

"There was a line out the door, down the stairs and around the block," recalled Lim. "That was when I knew people were really hungry to see images and stories of ourselves."

Since then, this hunger has only heightened. QWOCMAP's Film Festival has grown to introduce multiple pieces from international filmmakers and provide fully accessible interpretation and captioning for screenings.

For Lim, this summer's film festival holds a more significant place for her than previous years. An invasive

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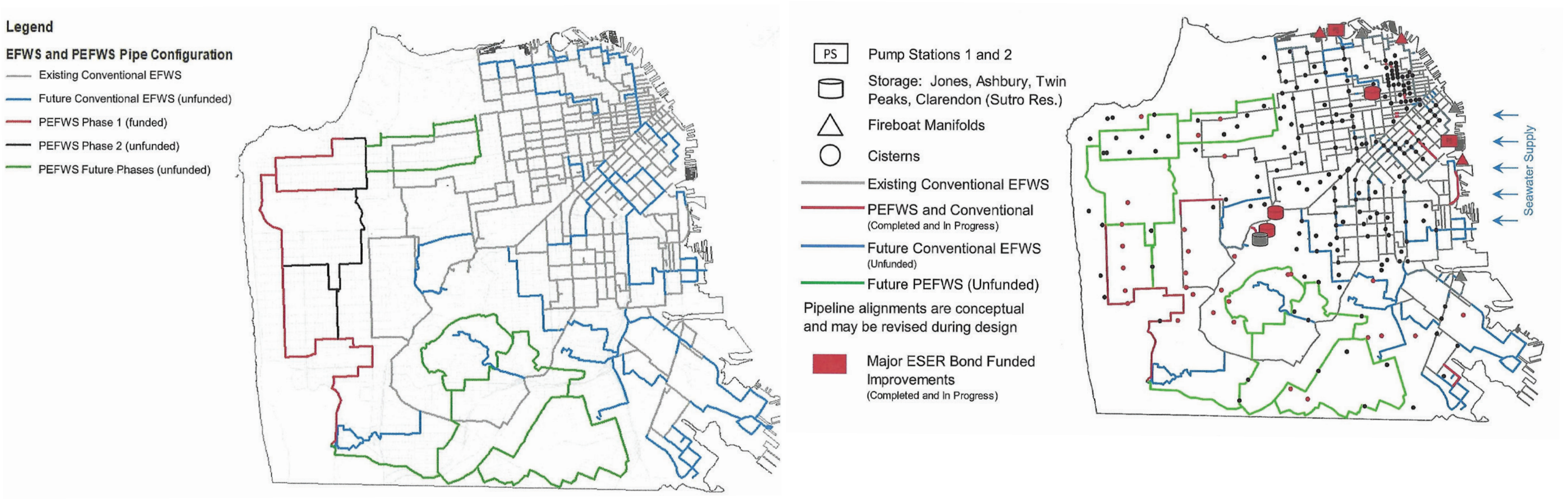
Legend
EFWS and PEFWS Pipe Configuration
Existing Conventional EFWS
Future Conventional EFWS (unfunded)
PEFWS Phase 1 (funded)
PEFWS Phase 2 (unfunded)
PEFWS Future Phases (unfunded)
PS
Pump Stations 1 and 2
Storage: Jones, Ashbury, Twin Peaks, Clarendon (Sutro Res.)
Fireboat Manifolds
Cisterns
Existing Conventional EFWS
PEFWS and Conventional (Completed and In Progress)
Future Conventional EFWS (Unfunded)
Future PEFWS (Unfunded)
Pipeline alignments are conceptual and may be revised during design
Major ESER Bond Funded Improvements (Completed and In Progress)
Seawater Supply

The map on the left, presented in June of 2021, shows the plan to upgrade the firefighting water system pipelines (indicated in red) in the Richmond District as "funded." On the right is a recent map with the same pipelines listed as "unfunded' (in green). ***Graphics courtesy of SFPUC.***

Firefighting

Continued from page 1

quake resistant, $154 million of it was allotted for expansion of the EFWS system into westside neighborhoods.

In June of 2021, the SFPUC presented a plan showing EFWS pipelines running north from a pump station at Lake Merced through neighborhoods in the outer Sunset and Richmond districts, listing them as "funded" by the bond money.

At a meeting of the Board of Supervisors' Government Audit and Oversight Committee last month, however, a revised plan showed the proposed pipelines for the entire Richmond District as "unfunded," as was the Sunset portion of a pipeline running north of Lawton Street.

District 1 Supervisor Connie Chan said she is "very concerned" about this change in the plan.

"It is very significantly different than what was actually provided on June 4, 2021, particularly about the pipeline alignments that are funded and unfunded," Chan said. "From the mapping that I actually have on file here it's clearly showing the pipes in the Richmond were actually funded. But here in the map that you presented today, talking about the pipeline alignment, they are actually in the green lines that are listed as 'unfunded.'"

Katie Miller, director of water capital programs for the SFPUC, responded that the whole system is much more expensive than what they had predicted.

"The planning-level estimates were based on a $15 million-per-mile for this pipeline and the first part of the pipeline that you see in red, which is the funded portion, is a larger-diameter pipeline because it's at the beginning of the system," Miller said. "So, it's 42-inch and then 36-inch diameter, welded steel, which are bigger pipes."

"As we move into the Richmond, they become smaller at 24-inch diameter. However, those first projects are more expensive because they're so much larger. So instead of just using that $15 million-per-mile estimate we actually have a more refined cost estimate and it's coming up more like $25-to-$30-million per mile.

"So we have shortened the segment shown that is funded and unfortunately we no longer reach into the Richmond District."

This explanation did not mollify Chan.

"Even though my colleague from District 4, representing the Sunset, is not here, I'm going to speak on behalf of the Sunset and my colleagues, both the former Supervisor Gordon Mar, as well as now District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio, is that when we advocated, me as an everyday resident from the Richmond at that time, in 2020 for the bond to pass, we had a fairly good idea of what can be funded and should be funded, including the Richmond and Sunset and making that connectivity; this is a significant departure," Chan said.

"It's a significant difference for the west side in terms of what is not being funded."

Chan then called for a hearing.

"It's less than two years apart and that is a significant difference in both the design and cost estimates," she said. "I want to express my frustration and disappointment in hearing this and learning about this on my own, to discover it this way instead of having it flagged for me or at least my community and my constituents."

The revised plan does include a new saltwater pump station on the City's east side in the India Basin, at the southern shore of the Islais Creek Channel. It does not, however, include any saltwater pump stations on the west side.

This is one of two contentious points that critics of the SFPUC's plans have been arguing about for years. The other is the SFPUC's plan to abandon the idea of an entirely separate pipeline system for post-earthquake firefighting on the west side and instead combine it with the potable water system that serves everyday uses.

"They (SFPUC) only have enough money to fix 15 miles of drinking water mains in San Francisco every year on average," said Tom Doudiet, a former SFFD deputy fire chief who oversaw the pipeline expansion before 2010, when then-Mayor Gavin Newsom moved the program from the fire department to the SFPUC in an attempt to balance the City budget.

"They have over 1,200 miles of very antiquated drinking water mains. They're very fragile, many of which will rupture in a major earthquake," Doudiet said. "When the first bond was passed in 2010 the SFPUC decided 'hey, you know what? If we can convince the public that using drinking water mains to fight post-earthquake fires, it's just as good as using a separate system.' In fact, it's completely bogus as far as I'm concerned as a firefighter.

"So we have shortened the segment shown that is funded and unfortunately we no longer reach into the Richmond District."

"You have to think of the Richmond and the Sunset as old, densely packed forest. You've got old, dry wood-frame buildings that are like kindling all bunched up against each other," he said. "You've got block after block after block and if you've got a fire that can't be addressed in the first half an hour or hour, pretty soon you've got half a block going. You've got conflagrations you've got to fight. You're not fighting house fires. You're fighting block fires."

The SFPUC says most of the bond money from 2010 and 2014 was used to reinforce the pipelines coming from Hetch Hetchy, where the City gets its water supply.

"You're depending on Hetch Hetchy water from 167 miles away, that crosses three major earthquake faults, crosses under the bay and then parallels the San Andreas Fault for 25 miles up the peninsula," Doudiet said. "If any of that goes down, you're limited to what you have in your reservoirs."

There are numerous water cisterns in the plan. Yet they have a limited supply of water in them and depend on trucks with pumps to be useful. Deputy Fire Chief Tom O'Conner said the SFFD has about 64 fire engines throughout the city.

Many of them will likely be busy fighting fires elsewhere. Also, if the roadways are damaged during a quake, firefighting vehicles may not be able to drive to the cisterns to use the water reserves to fight fires.

Water from Lake Merced is not potable, so it cannot be used for drinking.

O'Conner explained why the EFWS has to be a separate system from the main potable pipeline system.

"What happens if you use up all your drinking water?" he asked. "How do you know that you're going to be able to restore your drinking water supply in the days and weeks and maybe months after the earthquake? That water needs to be held in the reservoirs and saltwater needs to be used to fight the fires. If you don't have drinking water, you're going to have an epidemic of cholera in about three days," he explained.

"You cannot bet the survival of the City on using your drinking water to fight post-earthquake fires and it's stupid to do it when you have an unlimited supply of saltwater on three sides of the City," O'Conner said. "All you have to do is build the pump stations.

"This is just the PUC trying to figure out how they can use the bond money that the public was told would be used to supply adequate post-earthquake firefighting facilities to reinforce their drinking water mains. No, you can't do both, not if you're serious about putting out post-earthquake fires."

Commentary

Brian Quan

Envisioning a Better Neighborhood

When taking Muni's 38-Geary bus to downtown, it becomes increasingly clear the changes occurring around homelessness due to the recent injunction by U.S. Magistrate Judge Donna Ryu.

Like most everyone traveling on Geary these days, I've started noticing the tents on the median, extending beyond the previous tent encampments that have dotted the City.

While the legal process plays out, I want to discuss how we can take this opportunity to think about how the west side of the City can be a change leader and embrace solutions on homelessness.

Growing up in SF, I have seen the evolution of various attempts to "solve" homelessness with varying degrees of success (or failure depending on your perspective). Care not Cash and Homeward Bound have been followed up more recently with the Street Crisis Response Teams (SCRT) and the Compassionate Alternative Response Team (CART). Despite the best efforts of many, the homelessness population has grown not just in San Francisco but throughout the Bay Area and the rest of the state.

While we have seen plenty of ink spilled here critical of potential responses and misconceptions, a challenge like homelessness is a complex problem that doesn't have a simple, elegant nor easy solution. Dragging this issue to the courts shows how contentious the matter has become rather than bringing stakeholders to work together. Too often we look at statistics like the Point in Time Survey or the cost of Permanent Supportive Housing as an abstraction of the problem. As if the unhoused were only a number or an encampment or a specific drug or mental health problem.

The real challenge I see is developing a better sense of empathy toward the people who have ended up in these situations. Just like how there are many pathways to homelessness, there needs to be many pathways back up the ladder. Instead of a "fix it" approach where some just want the problem to be removed from sight or contained to certain areas, a mitigation approach should be adopted that isn't focused on the immediate outcomes but on stepped results.

While housing would appear to be the end goal, the outcome we should focus on is reintegration into society. As we see with people living out of RVs and cars along Lake Merced and in Candlestick Point, shelter is merely one aspect of the deeper issues surrounding homelessness. Even if we were to magically create housing for everyone, would we end up with

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QWOCMAP

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breast cancer struck Lim the year prior, and serious tests and procedures numbered their way into her life. The major surgeries prevented her from embracing her family that she found within QWOCMAP. Now finding strength in recovery, Lim cherished the joy and time she missed out on.

"It is life changing. I had a renewed sense of gratitude and appreciation for everything, for everyone," she said. "It's not just providing the instruction and technology, but it's really about creating that safe space."

Lim's search is not an isolated struggle. Recent rises in threats against queer expression in the U.S. point toward a need for this resource on a national scale. In early 2022, Florida's "Don't Say Gay" law banned students from learning about gender identity and watching films portraying queer characters in classrooms.

In California school districts, the recognition of June as Pride Month gave rise to enraged protests between pro- and anti-LGBTQ+ supporters. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 70% of queer teenagers face more severe mental health problems with "persistent sadness" than straight youth.

"In 2023, everything has been so tough on us with policies against trans folks and hate crimes against all kinds of people in the community," said Jackie Santiago. "It's just been hard."

Santiago, whose film "Para Vivir" premiered at the opening night of the 2023 film festival, immersed herself in the vulnerability of her production while in the QWOCMAP workshops. A lesbian and genderqueer Latina, Santiago enveloped her voice and poetry in "a visual love letter to lesbian and non-binary people of color."

"Para Vivir" featured vibrant scenes of lesbian couples of differing ages to spotlight the unique affection and joy of queer love. As a young couple giggled while holding hands, an elderly pair settled next to each other while surrounded by sunshine.

Jackie Santiago (right) with her friend, Symphony. Both starred in "Para Vivir," a film that premiered at the 2023 Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP) film festival. *Photo by Kate Quach.*

Like Lim, Santiago also clutched questions under her breath through her filmmaking process, only in the form of prayers.

"Growing up in a Christian household, I always questioned myself," she said. "I was like, 'God, if I'm doing something wrong, tell me, send me a sign.'"

Santiago found herself tangled in her ties to religion and her queer identity. Her intimate conflict burrowed itself through layers of her childhood with her grandfather being a pastor and the emptiness of support from her family. In her film, Santiago transforms her struggle by putting it "in the light" and radiates a message to teens searching for a sign of acceptance: "Remember to stay alive, push for your own happiness, push for what you love."

Judy Tsegaye captures another aspect of the struggle for acceptance in her film "Good Listener" exposing the reality of one-sided dialogues that leave words unspoken. As chatter from strangers and friends fill the air of her film, the intensity of Tsegaye's tuned-out silence grows in weight.

"There are so many stories I've heard and held space for, but my story is yet to be heard. When was the last time someone asked me how I was really doing?" she said after "Good Listener's" showing. At the end of the film, the screen thudded into a stark, black page. In contrasting white, the words "Black people are not your interim therapists" glowed onto the faces of the audience members. Tsegaye traced her intention of this message back to 20th century films that characterized Black people as solving "all the protagonist's problems but have no story of their own, arc of their own or character development of their own."

"I felt that reflected in my day-to-day life," she added.

A healing of inner wounds flowed through both Tsegaye and Santiago during the production of their respective films. Tsegaye reminded herself to mend over the guilty obligation she feels to "give all this energy and do all this emotional labor" for people who speak in single-sided conversations. Santiago found that her healing trailed inward, toward the core of her inner child. ("Para Vivir") was for that child that was hurting and for every other person that knows that pain. Now I know, I'm perfect as I am. I know God will love me as I am," she said.

Lim understands that a filmmaker's exposition of their vulnerability does not come easily, particularly if they are young, queer and address LGBTQ+ identity through their work. For many of the filmmakers featured during the festival, their work bore the raw hurt they experienced while growing up and searching for wholeness to their expression.

"Sometimes you may still be living at home with family, you may or may not be out to them," said Lim. "I hope that the screening and the film festival experience is transformative not just for (the filmmaker), but also for their family."

"Where I Unpack," a short film created by Chey Yen, reflects Lim's wishes. Yen, a queer and trans Chinese American, was turned away from their family when coming out to them. Yen moved from the Richmond District across the country and for years avoided coming back to San Francisco. As time passed, Yen's parents grew in love and understanding, and seated in the front section of the festival theater were a row of similar faces of family shown in the film.

These artists, including Yen, found a source of enduring support in QWOCMAP to authentically express their stories, Lim said. She found optimism in a future where mainstream media embraced more diversity, equity and inclusion while repeating its long way coming.

"It's been really, really hard work," Lim added. "But really gratifying and rewarding."

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History Lovers Commemorate Dutch Windmill's 120th Birthday

By Clarisse Kim

THU WNP RESTORING THE WINDMILLS
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Upper left: The front windows of the Western Neighborhoods Project (WNP) headquarters on Balboa Street near 17th Avenue features an exhibit celebrating the windmills in Golden Gate Park. *Photo by Clarisse Kim.* Lower left: The marquee of the 4 Star Theater announcing WNP's "Restoring the Windmills" event. *Photo by Clarisse Kim.* Right: Dutch Windmill on March 8, 2020. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

They look like two huge monsters with four arms each. The Dutch and Murphy windmills stand more than 100 feet tall and look like they are guarding the western end of Golden Gate Park.

They have seen more than a century of SF's history; this year, the Dutch Windmill will turn 120 years old, and the Murphy Windmill will turn 115.

These birthdays have not gone uncelebrated. The Western Neighborhoods Project (WNP) is a nonprofit that preserves, interprets and shares the diverse history and culture of San Francisco's west side. On June 16, the organization hosted an event to showcase the windmills' rich history.

Held at the 4 Star Theater in the Richmond District, the program began with a panel featuring exhibit curator and WNP board member Lindsey Hanson, as well as historians/writers Rose Marie Cleese and Don Propstra. A discussion followed Hanson's exhibition project, which consisted of an article and window display about the story of the two windmills.

According to WNP's Executive Director Nicole Meldahl, the window exhibits are a WNP tradition. About twice a year, the staff turns the front windows of its clubhouse on Balboa Street near 17th Avenue into a different historic display. As the latest curator, Hanson transitioned her research on the windmills into what Meldahl said was an "exceptionally dynamic" exhibit.

"There are animatronic features, informational panels and blown-up photographs," Meldahl said. "It's amazing."

During the panel discussion, Hanson described her approach to organizing the windmills' history.

"I focused on the people," she said. "Although it was easy to find the architects or city commissioners, I wanted to find people whose stories are not often told."

One such story is that of panelist Rose Marie Cleese and her aunt, Eleanor Rossi Crabtree. She was known for her contributions to the Dutch Windmill's restoration. The structure was built in 1903 to irrigate Golden Gate Park.

Unfortunately, by 1913, the windmill was abandoned for electric water pumps, and was left to decay for the next few decades. However, according to Cleese, Crabtree "took it upon herself to fix the windmill." After all, the Dutch Windmill helped her recover from polio.

"When (Crabtree) had polio, she would go to see the windmills," Hanson said. "Watching those big sails turn around made her think of walking again. She felt a great kinship with the windmills."

Crabtree held her first windmill campaign in the 1960s. Her efforts carried on until the 1980s and earned her the nickname "the windmill lady."

"She was really relentless when she got into a cause, and this was one of her final causes," Cleese said.

Armed with her story, her determination and help from the Seabees (the Navy's construction battalion), Crabtree was able to raise enough money to cosmetically restore Old Dutch in 1981.

Another story is that of Don Propstra, one of the leaders behind the Murphy Windmill's restoration.

"The reason I got involved was because of my family," Propstra said. "Being Dutch is very deep in my DNA. It seemed obvious to get involved with the windmill."

Propstra took action to save the windmill before it was permanently lost.

"In the late 1990s, that windmill had about a year or two left before it was going to fall down," he said. "It was in dire conditions."

His efforts centered around the renovation of Murphy's cap, the dome-like top of the structure that can swivel to face the wind.

"We wanted to take the cap off of Murphy and airlift it to the Netherlands," he said. "We wanted it to be restored authentically, by a Dutch windmill builder."

Propstra pitched this idea to the SF Recreation and Park Department, which supported his story and asked him to form a committee. Over the next few years, he gathered volunteers and raised funds for the renovation. By 2011, Murphy Windmill was extensively restored.

Left to right: Historian and writer Don Propstra, WNP Board Member Lindsey Hanson, historian and writer Rose Marie Cleese, WNP Executive Director Nicole Meldahl and WNP Director of Programs Chelsea Sellin at the WNP presentation at the 4 Star Theater on June 16. *Photo by Clarisse Kim.*

"On the day we lifted the cap off and sent it to the Netherlands, we had 26 different news outlets out there for the ceremony," Propstra said. "This G-rated project got enormous attention. It was a serendipitous experience."

WNP's Director of Programs Chelsea Sellin ended the presentation with a film screening of "A Jitney Elopement," a Charlie Chaplin film featuring cameos of the Murphy Windmill.

"The event was great!" Meldahl said. "We sold a majority of our tickets; the conversations were great and we all had fun."

Meldahl said WNP also coordinates other history projects, such as community groups and a weekly podcast. The nonprofit also manages the OpenSF history program, an online archive containing more than 50,000 old San Francisco photographs.

Regarding WNP's future projects, Meldahl revealed that Hanson will be spearheading a similar window exhibit and live program about the Alexandria Theater in the fall. Overall, Meldahl wants WNP to stretch the boundaries of traditional history by highlighting diverse stories and by using art to connect with the community.

"We want to meet the community where they're at," Meldahl said. "I hope that we keep opening the doors of history in every possible way."

Velma Tilden: The Daredevil Who Rode Murphy Windmill

One of Murphy Windmill's more eccentric stories is that of local daredevil Velma Tilden, whose prior stunts included making a mock-ermine coat out of Himalayan rabbit fur and riding a water walker across the San Francisco Bay.

In 1921, the American League of Veterans hosted a publicity stunt and fundraiser at Murphy in order to support out-of-work veterans. The main premise of the event: If someone were able to strap themselves to one of the windmill's blades and ride its sails, they would win a $1 box of candy.

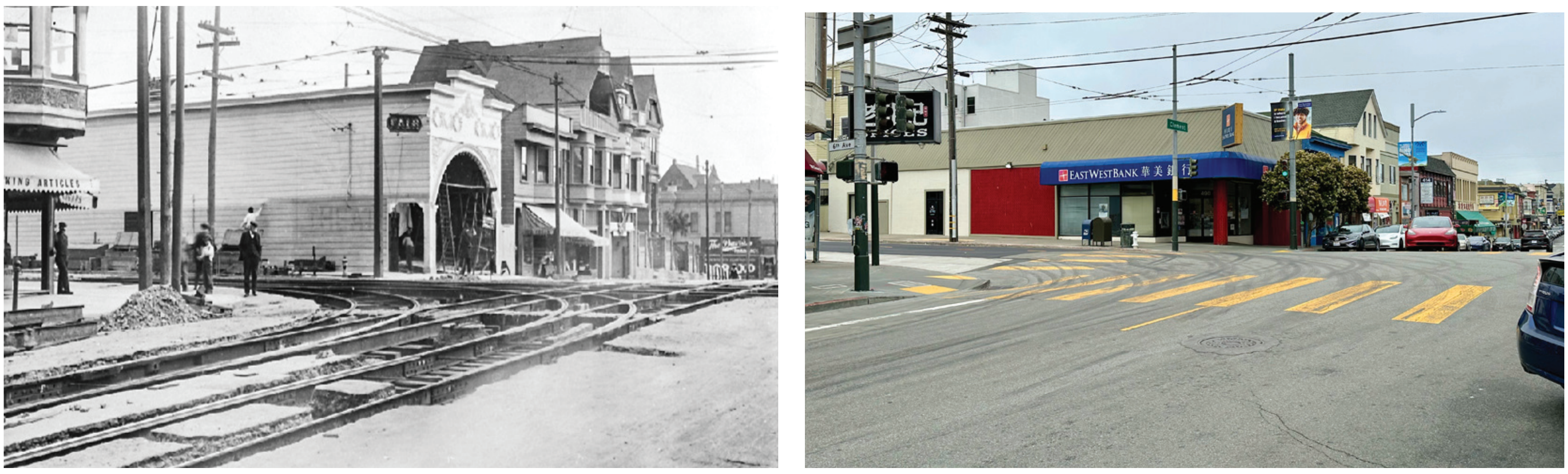
Tilden made not one, not two, but 25 trips around the windmill. At the peak of her ride, she was more than 200 feet above the ground.

When Tilden got off the windmill, she reaffirmed that "I did it for the dare, not for the candy."

– Clarisse Kim

Velma Tilden is ready for another spin on a blade of the Murphy Windmill. *Photo courtesy of SanFranciscoStory.com.*

‘Then and Now’: Clement Street and Sixth Avenue



Left: The view looking northeast at the corner of Clement Street and Sixth Avenue in 1909 shows new streetcar tracks being installed, and the building on the far corner, the Palm Theater, was getting a fresh coat of paint. *Photo courtesy of a private collector/Western Neighborhoods Project/OpenSFHistory.* Right: The same view 114 years later. The streetcar lines have come and gone and significant architectural changes have been made to the buildings on the north side of Clement Street, east of Sixth Avenue. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

Brian Quan

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an issue akin to the Japanese Hikikomori or modern-day hermits who are housed but live in isolation?

As the old adage goes, if you only have a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail. Fortunately, the City has numerous options ranging from direct programs to nonprofits where you can volunteer or donate to various causes that have also been covered in detail. But as a problem with many facets, there needs to be many facets to the solution, or the problem will continue to remain. While the west side is fortunate to have a variety of service providers, like Self-Help for the Elderly, On Lok, etc., we are currently devoid of a Navigation Center.

A Navigation Center is, per SF DPW’s website, “a successful program designed to shelter San Francisco’s highly vulnerable and long-term homeless residents who are often fearful of accessing traditional shelter and services. Navigation Centers provide these otherwise unsheltered San Franciscans room and board while case managers work to connect them to income, public benefits, health services, shelter and housing. Navigation Centers are different from traditional shelters in that they have few barriers to entry and intensive case management. Unlike traditional shelters, people with partners, pets and possessions are welcome at Navigation Centers. The purpose of a Navigation Center is to offer a respite from life on the street and to support people in changing their lives by making lasting social service and housing connections.”

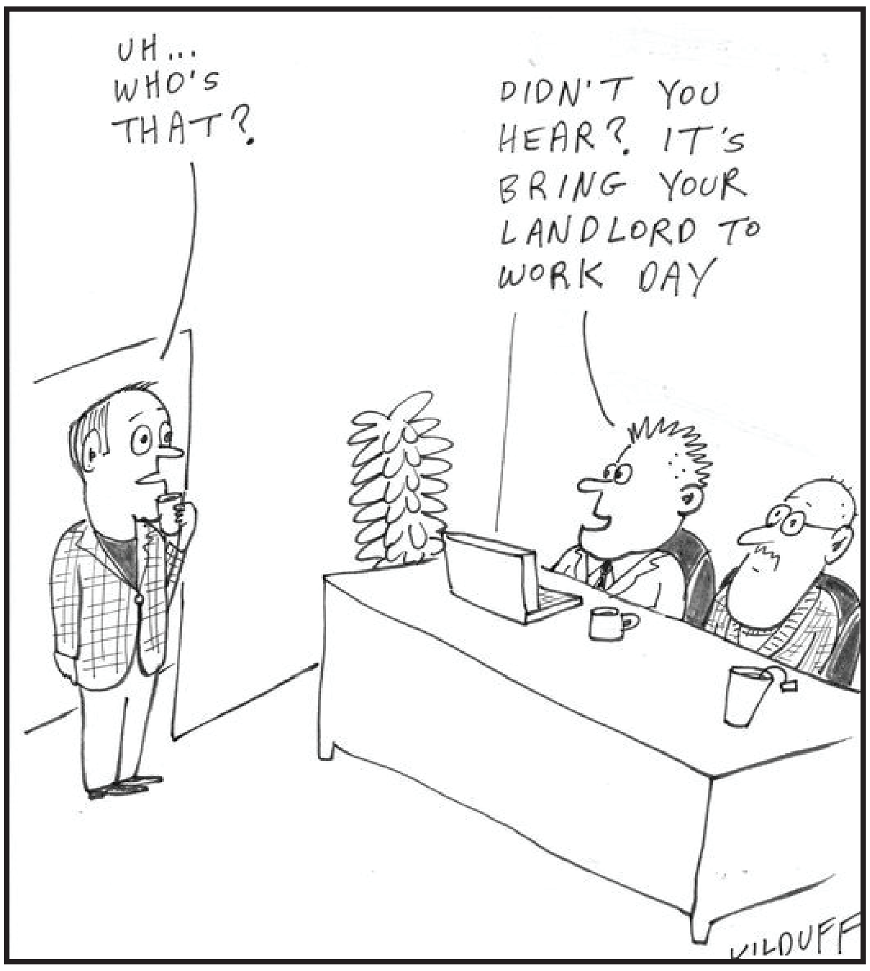
When these were proposed for their current locations, they were vehemently opposed by their neighbors due to beliefs that it would attract more homelessness as a form of induced demand. But after their implementation, I have yet to encounter anyone that has a bad thing to say about the Navigation Center once it has been established. With two high-profile locations by the Embarcadero and Fifth and Bryant streets in SOMA, while not eliminating or solving homelessness, they are mitigating the severity of homelessness in their vicinity.

Ultimately, even if we build more affordable housing and we tackle the more visible aspects of homelessness, we still need to create a bridge of social networks and support. Many of us can currently rely on family and friends, but those on the edges fall off because of that part of the social safety net. This is the lesson I’ve seen from observing non-profits like Project Homeless Connect, Welcome Home Project and the recently formed Miracle Messages: If we keep understanding each other at the human level and get back to connecting and supporting each other we can find us all in a better place.

Brian Quan is a Richmond District native, co-leader of Grow the Richmond, president of the Chinese American Democratic Club, member of the Park Presidio-Sunset Lions Club and participant in monthly Refuse Refuse S.F. street clean-ups.

Kilduff’s Korner

By Paul Kilduff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